

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are requested.

In the Final Rejection mailed April 19, 2006: claims 9-13, 16-23 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Matsumoto et al.; claims 15 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsumoto et al.; and claims 14 and 24-26 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

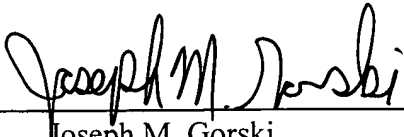
Accordingly, without acquiescing to the appropriateness of the prior art rejections issued by the Examiner, and solely to further advance prosecution of this Application, by the current amendment: the subject matter of allowable claim 14 has been incorporated into claim 9; the subject matter of allowable claim 24 has been incorporated into claim 17; claims 10, 14 and 21-24 have been canceled; and claims 11 and 25 have been amended so as to not depend from a canceled claim.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, with the allowed claims being 9, 11-13, 15-20 and 25-28, and an early Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner believes that any issues remain which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative by telephone to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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July 10, 2006